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An interview: Wang Fan-hsi, his life, the Chinese Trotskyist movement and the Chinese revolution

Monday 10 May 2021, by [SAKAI Yoshichi](#), [WANG Fanxi / Wang Fan-hsi](#), [WATARU Yakushiji](#) (Date first published: 30 August 1972).

The interview with the late Chinese Trotskyist Wang Fan-hsi [王凡喜] (1907-2002) was produced when Wataru Yakushiji, a member of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League (JRCL: Fourth-International group), visited Hong Kong and Macao in the summer of 1972.

This new version presentation has been prepared by Yoshichi Sakai.

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Wang moved to Hong Kong from Shanghai after the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949. Then, he was deported to Macao in 1951, and he had been confined in the Portuguese colony ever since. In those days, he got a message from the CCP via his wife, who was living in Shanghai: that is, he could come back to the mainland, if he might be ready to do some useful literary work, such as Russian or English translation, for China. But he responded negatively, notifying the CCP that he would accept the proposal only if all the Trotskyist comrades might be released from imprisonment.

Thus, when Yakushiji visited Macao in 1972, he was the first non-Chinese Trotskyist comrade for Wang there, and the former represented, so to speak, a new opening of the international Trotskyist movement or the Fourth International (FI) for Wang. In that context, the former took a detailed interview with Wang Fan-hsi on the Chinese Trotskyist movement from the 1920s to the 1940s. The interview became his earnest, appealing narration to the whole international movement, and the resultant text amounted to a concise summary of Wang Fan-hsi's autobiography: "Chinese Revolutionary - Memoir 1919-1949" (translated by Gregor Benton, Oxford University Press, 1980; the Japanese edition is also available as "中国トロツキストの革命 [Memoirs of A Chinese Trotskyist - unearthing the Chinese Revolution anew]", translated by Susumu Yabuki, Tsugeshobo, 1979).

Prior to Yakushiji's Hong Kong-Macao visit, a leading member of the newborn Revolutionary Marxist League (RML: 革命マルクス主義者同盟) of Hong Kong came to Tokyo to enter into its fraternal contact with the JRCL on his way back to Hong Kong in 1972, after having established the RML's formal relation with the FI at Paris. The RML was the Trotskyist successor to the youthful "70s [七十年代]" group which was born as an outcome of the global youth radicalization of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Wang's close comrade Lou Kuo-hua [盧國華] and Wang himself played a major role in the Trotskyist conversion of the "70s" group. Lou moved to Hong Kong in 1949, too, and main writings of Leon Trotsky and other Trotskyist literature were published by him in the late 1960s and early 1970s,

which had decisive influence over the “70s”-group militants. Wang and Lou successfully cultivated their fraternal relationship with the youth group, and Lou was elected to the leading body of the RML when the latter was founded.

I visited Hong Kong to see the RML members as a JRCL-leadership member in early 1973, and Lou Kuo-hua arranged my visit to Macao. There, I met Wang and another Chinese Trotskyist Suda [□□ or □□ Hsiang Ching], who had been deported to Macao, too, and we had extensive talks for three days. I reported to the FI center about their situation in Macao. Thus Wang Fan-hsi’s contact with the FI was established definitely, and several European FI members visited Hong Kong and Macao in 1973 and 1974. Tariq Ali of the British FI group was one of them: the JRCL invited him to Japan in 1974, and he visited Hong Kong and Macao and met Wang on his way back to England.

Having returned to London, Tariq Ali consulted Gregor Benton of Leeds University, England, about Wang’s possible release from his Macao exile, and the latter successfully managed to get his university to host a special lecture meeting for Wang Fan-hsi. Thus Wang left Macao and visited Leeds in 1975, and he settled down in the city and died there in 2002.

The following text is transcribed from a diazo copy of the typewritten text with the interviewee’s detailed touching-up, which was found in the Wang Fan-hsi archive at Leeds University. I translated the interview into Japanese and it was published on the Japanese “Trotsky Studies” (No.70, Spring-Summer 2017), and the following digital transcription is based on the Japanese translation. The translation was done with the valuable help of Yuzo Nagahori, professor of Keio University until a while ago, and, this time again, I relied on his expertise for this digital transcription. Professor Nagahori is the author of both the Japanese biography of Ch’en Tu-hsiu (“□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□” Yamakawa-shuppansha, 2015) and the book on Lu Hsün and Trotsky (“□□□□□□□□”, Heibonsha, Tokyo, 2011), and an editor-translator of both the Japanese memoirs of Cheng Ch’ao-lin (“□□□□□□□□ [Lively Crowd of the Early Chinese Communist Party]”, two vols., Heibonsha, 2003) and the Japanese selected writings of Ch’en Tu-hsiu (“□□□□□□”, three vols. Heibonsha, 2016-17).

In the original copy alphabetical spellings of the Chinese personal names are not necessarily uniform, and in the following text those spellings are regularized based on the ‘Select Biographical Reference List’ (Wade system) of the above-mentioned autobiography (ibid., pp. 261-278). Chinese characters are added selectively to the personal and geographical names and other pronouns in the square brackets when they appear for the first time, and “xxxx...” represents illegible letters of the original copy. The annotations are by the transcriber.

Yoshichi Sakai, April 28, 2021

An Account of the Chinese Trotskyist Movement □ Interview With Wang Fan-hsi by Wataru Yakushiji (30 August, 1972)

I joined the party (the CP of China) in 1925, when I was 18 years old. During the second Chinese Revolution (1925—1927), I was working as a cadre of lower and middle level in the party first in Peking, then in Canton and finally in Wuhan, where I was arrested for the first time in the autumn of 1927 when Wang Ching-wei [□□□] betrayed the revolution and made compromise with Chiang Kai-shek [□□□]. I spent one month in the prison. After I was released, the party sent me to Moscow. I studied in the Eastern University (University for Toilers of the Orient), where I accepted Trotskyism.

It was in the winter of 1927, when the struggle between Stalinist and Trotskyists was most severe and strenuous. When I came to Moscow, I did not know the difference between the two factions. In the University we only studied the documents issued by the central committee of the CP/USSR. All the literature was deleted and arranged in favor of Stalinism, and yet we could read the difference. Judging on the basis of our experience in China, we thought that the correct side was Trotsky. But in the university there was no Trotskyist organization. Then all Chinese students were transferred to Sun Yat-sen [孫逸仙] University in summer of 1928. We began to organize Trotskyist tendency in the university. At that time almost all the Chinese students of the Eastern Univ. converted to Trotskyism, and Trotskyism in the Chinese university was very influential. In autumn of 1928 we organized the leading committee of Trotskyism in the university, which was consisted of three members. I was one of them. We began to organize clandestine work in the Soviet Union, in cooperation with some Russian comrades who were also organizing themselves underground. The situation was very difficult, more difficult than the one which we found later in China, because of GPU. Our clandestine work lasted about one year from the autumn, 1928 to summer, 1929. I think that at that time there were more than four hundred Chinese Trotskyists, including the comrades in Sun Yat-sen Univ. and other military schools and some in Lenin Institute. [1]

In summer, 1929, I applied for a sending-back to China. My application was accepted, and arrived in Shanghai in September, 1929. At that time it was a secret that I was a Trotskyist and I worked within the party. Before we returned to China, we had a meeting in Moscow to discuss how we should work in China, and we had decided that we should work within the party to be best revolutionaries so that people might know that we were not petty-bourgeois intellectuals interested in new theories or novelties but genuine revolutionaries. We decided that we should prove ourselves to be real revolutionaries through the work of the party so that we could gain right of say and confidence of the comrades. We thought that we could convince and win them to our side only in this way. A group of more than twenty Chinese Trotskyists went back to China with me through Vladivostok, Yuansang [Weonsan 元山], Yenchong [Incheon 仁川], Dairen [Dalian 大連] (northern route) to Shanghai. [2]

When we arrived in Shanghai in September, 1929, we were received by Chou En-lai [周恩來], who was the head of the organization department of the central committee as well as the head of the military council of the CC. I was assigned to work under him, assistant to Chou in the organization department. And I was appointed to be responsible for the party work in one of the five districts of Shanghai. Shanghai was the most industrialized city in China, and the activities there were directly under the leadership of the CC, not under the Kiangsu [江蘇] province committee. The party considered the work in Shanghai, the most important. Under Chou En-lai there were five assistants and each one of them was assigned to take the lead of one district of Shanghai. I worked under Chou for about one year. During the course of the time, I kept secret contact with those Trotskyists who had returned to China before me — and they were expelled from the party in Moscow. Those Chinese were expelled from the Chinese party at the same time when Trotsky was expelled from the party of the USSR. They had been openly struggling with Stalinists, before we began to organize the clandestine work in Moscow and the party officials did not discover us. Those comrades who had come home before us numbered between thirty and forty. One group of them went to Peking, another to Hong Kong. The latter group became workers at the Taikoo Dockyard [太古船塢] in Hong Kong. There were some of them in Shanghai, who had established a bookshop “New World [新世界]” there. I kept a secret contact with them through the bookshop. These comrades had already organized themselves then and started to publish the organ paper “Our Word”(Women-teh-Hwa [婦女之聲]), the title of which was taken from Trotsky’s paper “Nashe Slovo.” “Our Word” was the first Trotskyist publication in China. This was in 1929. At that time I still worked within the party and devoted all my time to the party work. The situation was very difficult, very dangerous. In winter, 1929, the Moscow underground organization was betrayed, and all the Trotskyists were arrested to

be put in prison or sent to Siberia. Nobody was sent back to China. As a result Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow was dissolved, because it was useless for Stalinists to run the university only to educate Trotskyists. The informer of the case testified before the court that most students of the university were Trotskyists. And so I was discovered to be a Trotskyist.

When my secret was discovered, I was sick in hospital. Chou En-lai came to have a talk with me and said, "Moscow says that you are a Trotskyist, but we have worked together already for a year and you have done your work very satisfactorily. So you had better make a declaration that you will give up your position." I agreed to make a declaration. The next day a messenger came to take my declaration. My declaration said, "I am a Trotskyist, and I consider that the resolution made at the sixth congress of the Chinese party [held at Moscow in July 1928] wrong. But I will abide by the discipline of the party and I will be subject to the decision of the majority. I want to work in the party and reserve the right to speak at the next congress." The messenger took the declaration back and immediately the party declared in its organ paper "Red Banner [红旗]" that they had expelled me from the party. It was at the end of 1929. It was how my connection with the CP ended.

At that time, there were three Trotskyist groups in the forming in Shanghai besides the group "Our Word" which had already existed for at least one year. One of the three was led by Ch'en Tu-hsiu [陈独秀], founder of the CCP and the General Secretary of the CC of the party during the revolution from 1925-1927, who had got document about the left opposition of the Russian Communist party, from the returned students from Moscow and become a Trotskyist after he had studied them. Then he was convinced of the correctness of the Trotskyist opposition, he determined to struggle for it in China and so he wrote an "Open letter to the Comrades of the CCP" which was signed by 81 people, most of them were old cadres and responsible persons of the CCP. The "Open Letter" is one of the most important documents of the Trotskyist movement in China. As it is a criticism made by the same prominent leading members of the party who had been the executors of the bankrupted Stalinist policy in the second Chinese revolution. They began to publish the organs paper "The Proletarian [无产阶级]" .

When I was expelled from the CCP and recovered from my illness, I began to openly work for the Trotskyist tendency. I considered myself to be a member of the group "Our Word", because when we were in Moscow we had decided not to establish a separate group from the one which had already existed in China, that is, the "Our Word" group. When I actually wanted to take part in the work of the group, however, the "Our Word" had splitted into two grouplets. One grouplet consisting of those comrades from Peking in cooperation with Liu Jen-ching [刘锦承], was going to form a new group. As I, like all young Trotskyists of that time, did not quite believe the sincerity of the conversion of Chen and his followers to Trotskyism, I did not want to join their group. So after some discussions with the Peking cdes, I decided to work with them, by organising ourselves into a separate group and publishing an organ called "October [十月]" .

Liu Jen-ching was one of the twelve members who attended the founding congress of the CCP and once was the general secretary of the Chinese Socialist Youth League [中国社会主义青年团]. He returned to China a little earlier than I. After he had studied for a few years at the Lenin Institute in Moscow, he returned by way of Europe and stayed with Trotsky in Turkey for several days. In cooperation with him, Trotsky drew the first platform for Chinese "Bolshevik-Leninists", which Liu brought with him to China and with which he contacted Ch'en Tu-hsiu, trying to win him to the position of Left Opposition. Chen's conversion to Trotskyism, I think, to some extent was due to his persuasion, although Liu did not join Chen's group when it was formally organized.

Now we had three groups in China, each claiming to be Trotskyist. They were: "Our Word", "Proletarians" and "October". The fourth grouplet was the smallest and of the least importance called "Struggle [斗争]", which consisted of a few students returned from Moscow with Chao Chi [赵赤]

and Liu Yin [劉銀] as their leaders.

We thought it was not a good phenomenon to have four different groups of Trotskyism in China, and that we should form a unified organisation. Trotsky urged us to unify. Having read the letters sent to him by different groups, he told us that we were as if to split a hair into eight parts, i.e., Chinese Trotskyists were separated over trifles. We, then, organised the “Negotiating Council for Unification.” It took a very long time to negotiate. Each group brought forth different opinions at every meeting of the council. Really it was waste of time. There were, of course, many reasons why it took so long a time to negotiate the unification, but one of them was the attitude taken by the “Proletarian” group. The “Proletarian” group was made up of older comrades, and they despised younger comrades. Especially Peng Shu-tse [彭樹澤] insisted that it was not the question of “unification,” but others should join the “Proletarian” group. On the other hand, the younger people of other groups also had a prejudice against the older people of the “Proletarian” group. Younger comrades held that those people of the “Proletarian” should take the responsibility of the defeat of the second Chinese revolution, and said that they had to make a self-criticism in this respect. These were main hindrances to the unification. The person who demanded unification most strenuously was Trotsky himself. He, in one of his letters, said that yes, Ch’en Tu-hsiu had been an opportunist when he carried the Stalinist policy, but that he proved himself to be very correct in the declaration to the Chinese CP. Trotsky xxxxxxx of the opinion that Ch’en Tu-hsiu was, primarily, a good revolutionary, although he was not a good theoretician, was very experienced and a good observer. Trotsky insisted that it was a big gain of the Trotskyist tendency to have him, and urged us to unify the four organizations. This move of Trotsky’s quickened the process of unification, and greatly encouraged Ch’en Tu-hsiu, who replaced the old representation of the “Proletarian” by himself and brought the “negotiation” to come successful end.

On May 1, 1931 the Unification Congress of Chinese Trotskyists was held at the long last. At the congress the leading Central Committee was formed. Ch’en Tu-hsiu was general secretary of CC, and besides Chen, Cheng Ch’ao-lin [程朝林], Ch’en I-mou [陳毅], Chang Jiu [張九] (a Hong Kong worker), Lo Han [洛漢], Sung Feng-ch’un [宋楓春], and I were elected into the CC.* The CC did not include Peng Shu-tse, because he always expressed objection to the unification. The congress only elected him candidate to the CC. Peng did not even attend the Unification Congress. [3]

But a great misfortune came. On May 24 of the same year all the members of the CC except Ch’en Tu-hsiu were arrested. On the first day of arrest we were in the International Settlement under the British authority, but next day we were handed over to the hands of the Kuomintang. We had just started to work under the unified leadership, and had to suffer a very severe blow. We were informed to the Kuomintang by a traitor who had belonged to the “Proletarian” group. He had been representative to the Negotiating Council from the “Proletarian” and always tried to prevent the unification. Ch’en Tu-hsiu at last recalled him. This traitor was a supporter of Peng Shu-tse. He was representing Peng’s position in the negotiating council.

We were sentenced to long term imprisonment, ranging from 5 years to 13 years. Cheng Ch’ao-lin got 13 years, me 7 years. There were other comrades who were arrested at the same time — comrade Lou [Lou Kuo-hua [盧國華]], and youngest comrade named Pok Silao [卜西老],* who got two and half years. Among the members of the CC, Cheng Ch’ao-lin and I are the only people who are still alive. All the others died — Chen I-mou died in prison — he was a Taiku Dockyard worker, Lo Han was bombed to death by a Japanese airplane in Chungking[重慶], Sung Feng-chun died in Peking. [4]

Several months later Ch’en Tu-hsiu, Peng Shu-tse and others organized a provisional committee to carry on the work, but this lasted only about one year. All the members of the provisional committee were arrested again by Kuomintang.

After the arrest of the provisional committee Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang [陳其昌] was the only member who could work for the organization in Shanghai. Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang was my schoolmate in Peking University. He took charge of all the works — he put together those comrades who had lost contact. Really he was the most important person in the Trotskyist history as far as the period between 1932 to 34 is concerned. In 1934 some new comrades had come to join us. They were under the leadership of Liu Jen-ching in Peking. At that time Liu Jen-ching was cooperating with Harold Isaacs. By the way, in the preface of the present edition of Isaacs' book ["The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution", 1938] he mentions Liu Jen-ching by three initial letters — LJC. Besides those young new comrades two foreign comrades came to China, namely, F G [Frank Glass] and Harold Isaacs. F G had been Trotskyist already for some time when he came to Shanghai, but Isaacs was not. Isaacs was sympathetic to Stalinism when he came to Shanghai, where he arrived for the purpose to establish a newspaper called "People's Forum[China Forum]." Isaacs' articles were radical but sympathetic to CP. The turning point for Isaacs' political position came when Ch'en Tu-hsiu was arrested. When he was arrested, one of the Stalinists in Shanghai who was Isaacs' friend asked him to write an article to describe Ch'en Tu-hsiu as a man who had been working for the interest of Japanese imperialism. He was very honest man and so he got very angry with this man. From this incident he began to change his attitude. Because there was an influence from Frank Glass, Isaacs finally became sympathetic to Trotskyism. Then he gave his own printing machine to our organization, and went to Peking in order to collect materials about the Chinese revolution. Isaacs asked Liu Jen-ching to translate those Chinese articles for him, and Liu cooperated with Isaacs to write his book entitled "The Tragedy of Chinese Revolution." Liu Jen-ching's four young comrades came down from Peking to Shanghai, and they co-worked with F G and Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang in order to reorganize the Trotskyist activities in 1934. But this lasted only for a few months. They had not done anything serious when they were arrested except Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang and F G, Liu Jen-ching (who was arrested in Peking) and others were sent to Nanking [南京]. At that time I was still in prison. Liu Jen-ching was transferred to a penitentiary and they asked him to repent. He did so! After he was released from the reformatory, we considered him a xxxxxx coat. He later served in the Kuomintang Army as an instructor to brainwash arrested communists in Sian [西安]. He is a miserable fellow. At the end of 1934 I was released together with Comrade Lou. We actually served in the prison for four years. Because of amnesty we were released. We went back to Shanghai, I myself after having a short rest at my home in the countryside. In Shanghai Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang introduced me to F G. Frank Glass told me that he wanted to do something to help Chinese comrades to start work. I wrote a letter to Ch'en Tu-hsiu in Nanking prison and after some time he finally agreed to my proposal to start something with help from Frank Glass. We reorganized a new leading committee. Of course it was not an elected committee, because there were only a few comrades there. We got some activists — Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang, Frank Glass whose pen name was Li Fu-jen [李復], Yin Kuan [殷貫], and Chiang Chen-tung [蔣陳東] who is still in Mao's prison, and was then a worker, — Chiang Chen-tung was one of the organizers of the Shanghai insurrection in 1926, he was a very good comrade — and formed a new committee and decided to publish a new organ paper; to be precise we began to publish two papers, one political and the other theoretical. The theoretical one was titled "Sparkle" (Iskra [伊斯卡]), and the political one "Struggle"(Toh-Tseng [托生]), the latter was published monthly. These were the only Trotskyist publications in China that really count, because they lasted for many years, from spring 1935 to 1942 when a new split occurred to the organization.

These two magazines were printed very primitively, because we could not find any printing house to print them. Nobody would accept the job. We opened our own printing house, so to speak. We made use of printing types donated by Harold Isaacs. Isaacs had been publishing "People's Forum [China Forum]" and he owned his own printing machine, but after he changed his position he stopped publishing the magazine. And so he gave us his printing machine, but we could not work this machine. We after some time sold the machine very cheap, but kept the printing types. We made frame-works, putting the types in them, and printed like mimeograph. Three worker comrades did

this job. The money we got from F G was the only money we got, and all of it went into this printing work. F G monthly gave us one hundred dollars, that is, one-fourth of his salary. He lived in the French section, xxxong Road, of course in much better way than ordinary Chinese. A foreigner had to live as he had done in his own country, so it cost him a lot. Therefore to give us one-fourth of the salary was a very heavy burden to him. At that time nobody could have a job, and there was no source of money other than F G. We made our living by writing some articles for the left magazines, and yet even that was not so continuous. So all the comrades were very poor. One of the characteristics of Chinese Trotskyists was tremendous poverty.

Then it seemed in 1936 there began to exist a difference of opinion between CP and Lu Hsün [胡], the most famous modern Chinese writer, and we thought that he might change his position because of the difference. So we sent our organ paper to Lu Hsün, who replied to us with an open letter saying that our paper was very beautifully printed and hinted that he suspected we had got money from Japanese imperialists. He did not mention it so clearly but hinted that way.* But in fact the paper was printed very primitively. Anyway, we could not win Lu Hsün to Trotskyism. At that time CP was taking a policy of the united front with Kuomintang, and Lu Hsün expressed some doubts about it. There was really a difference developing among the CP orientated intellectuals. Lu Hsün insisted that they should not abandon the class position and that they could not make friends with the enemy of yesterday. There was a hot discussion between Chou Yang [周] and Lu Hsün. Chou Yang represented the Moscow policy in favor of the popular front. Of course Mao Tse-tung [毛] and Lu Hsün also admitted the policy of the popular front, but there was difference of interpretation how to enforce it. In the field of literature there was a difference of slogans. Chou Yang was for "literature of national defence", while Lu Hsün "literature for the national revolutionary war". We came to know that there was a difference. In our paper "Struggle" there were many articles criticising the popular front, and we thought we could influence Lu Hsün. [5]

At this time the circulation of the organ was about two or three hundred. The work must be strictly clandestine, and we handed paper hand to hand, only to the people really we could trust. Since we succeeded in reestablishing new organ papers and restarted our work in Shanghai, we wanted to reestablish contacts with other branches — such as provincial branches — especially with Hong Kong comrades. In China there were some special districts where Trotskyist activities were active — Hong Kong, Peking, Kwangsi [廣西], and Kengcho [景] county in the Chekiang [浙江] province. It was in May 1936, just at the same time when Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang sent a letter to Lu Hsün, that Frank Glass and I went to Hong Kong to reestablish contact with Hong Kong comrades. We went there to help them to start organisation work again and to start an organ paper. They began to publish a paper "Star [星]" also in a very primitive way.

In 1937 I was arrested again by the Kuomintang, this time only me. They discovered relation between Glass and us, but they did not know where we lived. But it was very easy to find where a foreigner lived. So they put watch on Frank Glass's home, and followed the men who visited Glass. Thus they found me in May, 1937. Glass then went back to the United States. But Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang and other comrades were still safe and they continued to publish papers. I was sent to a secret prison in Nanking. In Kuomintang there were two special organizations against revolutionaries. One was "Chünt'ong [軍統]", the other "Chungt'ong [中統]." "Chungt'ong" was a bureau for statistics and investigation under the CC of Kuomintang, "Chünt'ong" a bureau for the same purpose under the military committee of Kuomintang. The first in charge of civilian political offenses, and the latter in charge of the "unreliable" people in the military field. They organized these in imitation of Hitler's methods. They sent students to Germany to study the methods dealing with revolutionaries — it was a specific "science". I stayed in the prison of "Chungt'ong" for eight months. Life was a little better than ordinary prisons, but brutal spiritual pressure and torture were unbelievable. Every cell was solitary, the size of a cell was just big enough for a bed and a toilet, nothing more. You could not

read anything in the prison. The only letter I could read during those eight months were the letters printed on the box of tooth-powder. One of the reasons I have a disease in my nerve has come from the torture I got in this prison. Anytime they called me out of the cell and made me work, especially at midnight. No questions were allowed to ask. And the inquisitors did not ask you any question xxxxxxx only one question they asked you was: "Have you changed your mind?" When you answered in the negative, they would treat you to any kind of torture and then sent you back to the cell to lick your own wounds. There was no trial. The only way to get out of this prison was to surrender and give up your political view and say that you would work for Kuomintang in order to suppress revolution. The only choice was to be spiritually destroyed or physically destroyed, that is, death. There was no fixed term for imprisonment. Therefore you by all means make yourself serve Kuomintang in order to set yourself free. If you do so, you can be free at any time. The prison was like this, and it was just like hell.

At the end of November, 1937, when the Japanese Army approached Nanking only a few miles away from it, I could hear the sound of shelling very clearly in the prison. Everyday, all day long, Japanese airplanes were flying over the city, but, of course, prisoners were not allowed to go to shelter even when bombing over the city was going on. We just remained in the solitary cell. So if the prison had been bombed, it would have meant just death in the cell. At that time the second united front between CP and Kuomintang going on, and all the prisoners except me were set free. I had become the only one in the prison. I remember that it was perhaps 30 or 31 of November that the last gaoler came to me and told me that he was going to leave the prison. He said that I might go, therefore. He was a really good fellow. He gave me two dollars, because I was penniless. So I walked into the city and found a friend and borrowed twenty dollars. As a refugee of war I climbed on a refugee train to Sūchow [蘇州], Chengchow [鄭州], and then to Hankow [漢口]. It was only a few days before the Japanese Army entered Nanking and carried out that Nanking Massacre. Even on the day I was set free, I found many corpses on the streets and byways in Nanking. They were either killed by bombings or, in case of refugees from Shanghai, died of starvation or illness. It was a very miserable scene.

As a refugee I went to Wuhan [武漢]. I arrived there at the beginning of December, and found Ch'en Tu-hsiu. He asked me to live in his home. He received me very warmly and had a discussion with me. I found he was spiritually depressed, although still he had xxxxx sound political opinions. We discussed but differed on many questions. The discussion lasted for many days. I proposed to publish a legal paper in Wuhan, but he strongly objected, saying that it was useless. He proposed me to go to the Army. He said that we must take arms and said that it would be very ridiculous things, if we wanted to participate and support the anti-Japanese war but always stand outside of it. Anyway Ch'en Tu-hsiu said that we must take arms. At that time there was a very good chance for us to begin armed struggle. There was a general named Ho Chi-feng [何奇豐]. He was a division commander in Hupeh [湖北] Province under Sung Che-yuan [宋哲元]. One of his brigades was commanded by Chik Sing-wang [戚希望] — the hero of the Marco Polo Bridge [七七] battle. Ho was seriously wounded in the battle and sent back to xxchang to be cured. When I was in Wuhan, this commander was in xxxxxxxxxx and he was going back to the army. During his stay in Wuhan he read many books, and he was a man of intelligence — a man who thinks. So he has thought of lots things why they have suffered so many defeats before Japanese imperialist army. And he had come to be disappointed with the way of Kuomintang. He came to think that Kuomintang was too much degenerated. He, therefore, wanted to find some way out of this situation. Of course he had known the name of Ch'en Tu-hsiu, and moreover his elder brother was Ch'en Tu-hsiu's friend. So he found Chen in Wuhan and had a talk with him. And he proposed Chen to send some of his "disciples" to the army in order to train the soldiers of his division, namely, to train his men in patriotic education. Of course he was only one of those "patriots." Chen thought it was a very good opportunity. His division did not directly belong to Kuomintang. It was under the command of General Sung Che-yuan, who was an independent warlord from Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. So he was not dominated by that

Chünt'ong. That was why Ch'en Tu-hsiu thought it was a very good chance to take. At last we decided to go with him, and Ho Chi-feng accepted us. Pu Teh-chih and I and another comrade named Ma Ho-tien [馬何天], were to go there first. It was the 179 Division of the army stationing at that time on the southern bank of the Yellow River [黃河]. I was to be "chief of staff" of this division, and Pu was to be "secretary" to him. Of course it was forbidden by Kuomintang to have political person like in the army, and we were going there pretending to be "chief of staff" or "secretary." We got train tickets and were to start the next day. Only on the previous night of our departure this commander was suddenly dismissed by Kuomintang, because Kuomintang discovered his relation with Ch'en Tu-hsiu and us. Maybe he was informed by other commanders. So we lost connection with him anyway.

By the way, we heard the name of Ho Chi-feng again later. This time he was a commander of the Kuomintang Army in the battle in Süchow. In this battle about half a million Kuomintang soldiers were captured by the Communist Army, in which he played a very important role. He was a garrison at Süchow and he rebelled against Kuomintang. He turned side to CP. In other words he helped a great deal for CP to win a great victory. When People's Republic was established, he was appointed a member of the military commission. He now works under Mao Tse-tung. By this fact I think we were right in judging that he wanted to do something and it was possible for us to intervene. He was, of course, simple-minded but wanted to do something for revolution. So I think if we had gone with him to the army we could have done something valuable. All of this was in my Wuhan period.

Ch'en Tu-hsiu had another proposal. He said that Trotskyist organization no longer existed. It was true that at that time there did exist an organization — some comrades working for Trotskyism in Shanghai — but he thought there was no perspective in the then way of work. He proposed that we must take another way, namely, to work together with so called "Democratic" groups, such as Salvation Society [救國團], Democratic League [民權黨], and Workers and Peasants' Party [工農黨] which was at that time generally called the "third party." At that time these groups seemingly took a neutral position between CP and Kuomintang. They consisted of those elements as intellectuals, bourgeois intellectuals, and left-wingers. Chen proposed that we should cooperate with these groups, and work among the masses under them. At that time these groups had mass followers to some extent, especially the Salvation Society. It had a considerably big side of followers. I did not agree with Ch'en Tu-hsiu. I thought that it was another of popular front. Chen wanted me to be representative at the meeting with these groups. Those groups were going to have a meeting attended by representatives from each in order to negotiate a united front. I refused to take that action. After that I stayed with him for a short time and then I left Wuhan. I first went to Hong Kong and then to Shanghai. My family was in Shanghai and my old friends such as Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang and other comrades were there, too. By the way, in Wuhan Chen got Lo Han to attend the meeting with three democratic groups. But the three groups did not want to take common action with Ch'en Tu-hsiu because of the pressure from the CCP. So nothing happened to his attempt.

When I went to Shanghai comrades there asked me to join the editorial board of the paper "Struggle [鬥爭]". At that time this editorial board was playing the role of the Central Committee of the organization. By the way, in the Chinese Trotskyist movement an elected Central Committee existed only once. It was the CC which was formed at the Founding Congress. This CC was destroyed in less than a month after it was formed. And so all the time after that the leadership was taken by provisional committees or something like that. And in 1938 when I went to Shanghai this editorial board was playing the role of CC. On the editorial board were Peng Shu-tse, Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang, Cheng Ch'ao-lin, Liu Chia-liang [劉加亮], me and comrade Lou. We continued to publish "Struggle" until the sign of American intervention into the Sino-Japanese war began to appear. We worked very amiably and there were no incidents worth mentioning. In 1939 I wrote an article to discuss what kind of attitude we should take if the US intervened in the Sino-Japanese war. I discussed that we should think deeply whether the character of the war would change or not. My answer was that if

American Army intervened in the war and became the main counterpart of Japanese Imperialism, then the war would change its character and would become the war between Japan and U. S., and that the Chinese side would become a junior partner on the American side. I said that then we should take our attitude to the war accordingly. I did not specify how to change our attitude, I did not think, thoroughly. I just raised the question. At that time Peng Shu-tse was in Hong Kong. The members of the editorial board except Peng Shu-tse agreed with me. But when Peng Shu-tse returned from Hong Kong, he expressed objection. Peng insisted that however to a great extent the American Army dominated over the Chinese side, the war would not change its character. Thus a difference began to take place between us. Of course other questions were involved in the difference which began to appear. Discussion did not deepen, and other questions overshadowed the main point I had raised. Comrade Cheng Ch'ao-lin said yes, we should take the policy of revolutionary defeatism if the American intervention came to the Sino-Japanese war and transformed it into a war mainly between the two imperialist powers. Peng Shu-tse said that there would be nothing in common with revolutionary defeatism even if the American Army intervened, and that our attitude should be that of defensism. I thought at that time that if we really participate in revolution and if we command some armed forces and if we are going to carry out our revolutionary program, then the essence of our attitude should be a kind [of] revolutionary defeatism. In short, just xx think of xxxxx situation; if we are on the front in the battle with Japanese army and if an anti-Kuomintang revolutionary situation arises in the area under xx context, and we xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx give lead to the revo.. Then the front against Japanese invasion will be xxxxxx influenced or weakened. In this case old patriots would say that we were traitors to patriotism. I thought that our choice would be either to abandon our revolutionary program and cooperate with Kuomintang for the victory of Kuomintang on the front or for us to continue our revolutionary program despite of a temporary defeat on the front. So I thought that we should take the policy of revolutionary defeatism, IF WE REALLY MEANT IT. It was not a question of attitude written down on a sheet of paper. If the question was a matter of writing on paper, it would have been really easy, because no facts came into the issue. But the situation was telling that such a case was approaching, so we must prepare ourselves. The real choice was whether we should abandon our revolutionary program or we should keep on our struggle despite of a temporary defeat on the front. I thought that by all means we should keep our revolutionary struggle. In the situation at that time to overthrow the Kuomintang regime was absolutely necessary for us to really keep on our revolutionary struggle for a real victory over Japanese imperialism. I thought we should not think that victory in war first and revolution second. In essence Comrade Cheng Ch'ao-lin agreed with me. The whole question should have been dealt with seriously, not as a question on paper. My opinion was for an actual situation that was coming upon us. Of course Lenin's position was in the reactionary war, and not in a progressive war. So how to raise our slogan and how to formulate our revolutionary slogan was a great question. Therefore the position taken about this was different between Cheng Ch'ao-lin and me. I thought that we should emphasize the importance of the victory over Japanese imperialism but at the same time we should stress that the most important weapon for the weaker Chinese to defeat the strong Japanese imperialism was revolution and to spread revolution to Japanese soldiers. So in my opinion our slogan was not "revolutionary defeatism" but "revolutionary victoryism." My opinion was, in essence, that only revolution can achieve real victory over imperialism.

I think that Peng Shu-tse did not think about the question very seriously. He only said that in Lenin's opinion we should take the attitude of revolutionary defeatism to reactionary war and we should support a progressive war. He insisted these two should not be confused. At last the difference in the editorial board showed a balance of 4 to 2 — four comrades agreed with me; Cheng Ch'ao-lin, me, Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang, and Comrade Lou; and Peng Shu-tse and Liu Chia-liang against our position. In the editorial board we were the majority, and Peng was in the minority. But some time later a meeting was held in Shanghai and it was attended by less than twenty comrades. At the meeting this question was discussed and the majority turned. In this our xxxxxx comrades accidentally helped Peng

Shu-tse to some extent. At that time there was a Pacific Bureau of Fourth International which specifically dealt with the questions of the countries in the Pacific area. I cannot remember exactly whether it was the Pacific Bureau of the International or of the American party. At one of the meetings of that Bureau, a resolution about the Chinese question was passed. Its position was quite similar to Peng's and this authority came just in time to help Peng's side. Before the meeting the majority supported our position, it was chiefly under the influence of the resolution of the Pacific Bureau that made the majority change their position, although in the Editorial Board Peng's position still remained the minority. But this did not result in a split of the organization. The organization splitted later because of another facts: After the meeting, we demanded to continue the discussion upon the question in the internal bulletin and that some signed articles even if not entirely representing the position of the majority could also be published in the "Struggle". Peng and his followers refused our demand, saying that the discussion could no longer continue after the question had been settled at a meeting and that in the organ paper nothing but articles representing the majority should be published. We decided to publish our own paper, a mimeographed one, titled "Internationalist [國際主義]." Upon this, Peng group declared that the minority violated the discipline, but they did not expel us. Thus the organization of Chinese Trotskyists splitted into two independent groups again.

Not long after the split, Japanese Army occupied the International Settlement of Shanghai and the situation was becoming worse and worse. So the member of Peng's group actually dispersed. Liu Chia-ling left Shanghai, Peng Shu-tse changed his name and became a professor in a Christian university in Shanghai and lived like a professor. But the minority continued to publish "Internationalist". "Struggle", now becoming Peng's paper, ceased publishing, because nobody worked for "Struggle". We continued publishing "Internationalist" under 'the Japanese' occupation.

On D-Day when Japanese Army surrendered, many comrades came back to Shanghai from inland districts — Chungking[重慶], Kungming[昆明], etc. They for the first time knew there was a difference of opinion among us and there was really a split. They asked both sides what were the differences, and they took side with either of the two sides. Some joined Peng's side, some joined us. The change was so sudden that the Kuomintang's domination was not carried out so strictly. So there was something like democracy in Shanghai which we could enjoy. There was a kind of freedom. This situation continued from August, 1945 to the beginning of 1949. In the situation like this both groups, Peng's group and our group, were growing. Students and workers came to us, especially students. Both groups published magazines. Peng's group published a theoretical magazine "Chachang [真]" (Truth) and a magazine for youth "Youth and Women[青年與婦女]." We published a magazine "New Banner[新旗]" which was printed and sold at newspaper stands. During this period there was no attempt to reunify the two groups. Never from either side. But we cooperated to some extent. In "Truth" we, too, wrote some articles for them, and so there was some cooperation between the two groups. In 1948 Peng began to organize a new party "Revolutionary Communist Party [革命共產黨]." We organized a new party a few months later than they. It was in April, 1949, only one month before the Communist Army came to Shanghai. Our party's name was "Internationalist Workers Party [國際主義工人黨]." Members of our party consisted mostly of youth. It was something like the present "70s Biweekly" group in Hong Kong, but it was not so much a confused group like "70s". Most of the young people came to us from the Stalinist camp. We had about 60 or 70 members in Shanghai, and it had more than two hundred if we included other parts of the country. I cannot tell how large the majority was at the time exactly. Because Peng always suggested, never told his "business secret".

In May, 1949, the Communist Army came to the Yantsu River [揚子江: Chang Jiang 長江] and approached Shanghai. Then Peng's group had already moved the leadership of their party to Hong Kong half a year ago. So most cadres of the majority moved to Hong Kong together with Peng. But the minority that is the IWP decided to remain in Shanghai. The IWP remained in Shanghai, Peking, Kwansi [貴州],

Chekiang[](Hangchow[]), and kept on publishing our paper. Comrade Lou and I was sent to Hong Kong to organize our group there. Even after the Communist Army took Shanghai, our organisation still continued to grow. It grew very rapidly under the CP control. We began to publish an underground new magazine "Marxist Youth []." Cheng Ch'ao-lin and other comrades told me that this new magazine was welcomed by youth, because the young people who first welcomed the liberation army, began to be disappointed very quickly. They were disillusioned and sought contact with us. The majority's leadership moved to Hong Kong, but many of the majority did not have any relatives or something in Hong Kong, and they could not move and remained in China. They formed at that time local councils in Kwangsi [] and Chekiang provinces. But the majority stopped publishing their magazine when the leadership moved to Hong Kong, and they could not continue activities. I think most of them had lost contact with the leadership by that. So the majority could not take advantage of the situation which took place after the Communist Army come to Shanghai. "New Banner" was banned by the Kuomintang government by its 16th issue, calling it a "reactionary paper." But we continued to publish it for four issues by mimeographed edition underground. So there were twenty issues of "New Banner" in total. During the time of three years since the Communist take-over of Shanghai until 1952 when comrades of the minority were arrested, our organization grew, especially among youth. There appeared disillusionment, to the CP rule very rapidly. They expected too much, and having illusion, they quite readily listened to our voice. Then in 1952 CP arrested all the comrades. I cannot understand why CP tolerated us for three years. Maybe because our influence increased very much, they arrested all the Trotskyists. You cannot explain the arrest in other ways. At first they had other enemies more fearful than us, but after as long as three years they feared us a great deal, because we were growing so rapidly. In the beginning CP just made such famous Chinese ex-Trotskyists as Liu Jen-ching and Lichi [] (a Marxist scholar) write declarations denouncing Fourth International and support Mao Tse-tung. That was all. They gave them jobs. Lichi translated correspondences between Marx and Engels and Liu Jen-ching began to teach at school. But in three years they found us very dangerous, and so they launched "witch-hunt." It was carried out just one night. It was the night of December 22-23, 1952. All over China all the Trotskyists were arrested. We roughly estimate about three hundred were arrested. Among those who were arrested were included sympathizers and relatives. For instance, I have two nephews, one was a comrade, the other was non-political, yet both were arrested. My nephew comrade was killed in prison; only one month later they called my brother to the police station to take the corpse of my nephew. Since 1952 there could not be any Trotskyist movement worth mentioning in China.

Immediately after the victory of Mao Tse-tung most of the comrades were surprised and asked themselves why we failed and why Mao succeeded. Chinese Trotskyists had never thought that Mao would succeed. How to explain this simple fact — this was the main problem. Peng Shu-tse and Liu Chia-liang and others just did not see the problem. They insisted that nothing new happened. At the end of 1949 they said that Mao Tse-tung dared not fight against the bourgeoisie and would not confiscate their property. They said that Mao would seek compromise with the bourgeoisie and inevitably would give concession to the bourgeoisie and surrender before them. Peng and Liu just closed their eyes before the fact.

Cheng Ch'ao-ling said that the revolution was not a proletarian revolution. The success only represented the state-capitalism. He said that Mao's party might expropriate capitalists but that it would not be for socialism but for state-capitalism. I wrote a pamphlet and said that Mao Tse-tung's victory was the victory of the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy was a new class, and so the victory meant a victory of collectivist bureaucratism. But I held this position only for a short period. I soon reconsidered and concluded that the new regime was a deformed workers state.

Peng Shu-tse never admitted any mistake, he always claims to be infallible. During the past score of

years, it is true, he had made some changes in his opinion about the Mao regime; first he said that it was a power of bourgeois character, then he called it a transitional regime, then finally he called it a degenerated workers state. In making these changes, however, he never gave explanations. He never showed the process of his thinking. I myself wrote all I thought and explained the process of the changes of my thinking, especially in the last chapter of "My Memoirs".

Peng first refused to accept the fact of revolution. Some time later, when he could no longer close his eyes to the fact, he said: yes, there was a revolution, but it was achieved only thanks to some "objective exceptional historical conditions", having nothing to do with CCP's policy. More concretely, he said that it was achieved mainly because of the fact that the Soviet Army gave arms to Mao's men, while the American imperialists did not give sufficient arms to Kuomintang to resist Mao's advance. Such an explanation seems to me not only wrong but also ridiculous.

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Formerly we identified Mao Tse-tung with Stalin. But in reality there is something different. Mao is of course a Stalinist. But Mao has been living in the Chinese realities, and so he has had to make some alterations to the traditional Stalinism. He has been under the impacts of revolution. When Mao (I mean the CCP) made a united front in 1934 [\[6\]](#) for the second time with Kuomintang, we said he had surrendered and knelt down before Chiang Kai-shek and abandoned all class struggle. But in fact we took his tactical maneuvers for the strategic course. Mao is very much a tactician. He has always been a tactician. At that time he said that he would stop agrarian revolution, but in reality he still kept on carrying it out. He continued his class policy. We said that Mao's party was not a workers party. We described his party as a petty-bourgeois peasant party and therefore we said that his party was never able to carry out a revolution. Thus we misjudged the real character of Chinese CP. CP is of course a degenerated party, but it had some right points. First of all they lived among the masses, Mao lived together with the masses. At this point CP was much better than we. We lived outside the masses. Although the masses CP lived with were peasantry and not workers, they lived with them and struggled with them. In China poor peasantry is also a revolutionary force. We Chinese Trotskyists underestimated this revolutionary force of the poor peasantry of China. We dogmatically said that we should go to workers and direct the peasantry only through workers. We insisted upon an indirect contact with the peasantry. We insisted that we could never directly lead the peasantry. We thought that if we directly went to peasantry, then we will be degenerated into a peasant party. We acted according to our dogma. That was wrong. When we consider this question in retrospect, we think that if we had had, in that reactionary period of the early thirties, some connection with peasantry and had gone to villages and do some revolutionary work among the peasantry, just like CP we could have carried out agrarian revolution but also have built a combat party.

We dogmatically thought that a workers revolutionary party could only be built in industrial centres and only recruiting workers to be the overwhelming majority of its members. Otherwise, we thought at that time, we could never build a party, which was capable of in any sense serving the revolutionary interests of the working class. Such a view, I think, is at least dogmatical. What is a revolutionary workers party? It can be defined by many standards. The social composition of the membership is just one standard. There are a lot of so called workers parties which are reformist in politics, sometimes they even serve the capitalism and imperialism better than the bourgeois parties. Therefore we cannot decide whether the party proletarian or not by the standard of membership alone. I think the most important standard is its political position. If the platform is for socialist revolution, for permanent revolution and observe Leninist organizational principle, I think, it may be a proletarian party, even if only a few members of it are workers and its most leaders are petty bourgeois intellectuals. Our another wrong point was that we did not realize the importance of armed struggle. In countries like China and under a terror regime like that of Kuomintang in the

early 30's, it was very, very difficult indeed for revolutionaries to build a party in industrial centres. For that purpose we had done our best and many comrades even had sacrificed their lives; but we did not succeed. If we had become aware earlier, especially during the wartime, that our attitude was too dogmatic and that it was permissible for us to work in the countryside and to be engaged in armed struggle, we could have built our party with great success. As I told you above, there was no lack of opportunities for us to actually participate in the war. True, we missed one opportunity (with General Ho's army). But if we had persisted, we could have got a second chance and a third chance. But we never sought that kind of chance. When I returned to Shanghai from Wuhan, I reported about our attempt to go to the army to the Editorial Board (de facto C.C. in that time), all members approved the attempt, including Peng Shu-tze. But later, when controversy began to emerge in the Editorial Board, Peng changed his position and branded my aborted attempt as a grave mistake. He described the attempt as "military adventurism". In fact, he opposed to the armed struggle in principle.

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In criticising the policy of the CCP, I think, we must be in a responsible way. I mean that when we criticise we must at the same time think what shall we do if we are in their place. To make irresponsible criticism of our opponents is just to discredit ourselves when the criticism proves untrue. But we, especially Peng was, usually inclined to describe or criticise Mao's party not as it really was, but as we thought it to be.

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When the Communist army took Nanking and approached Shanghai where we had a kind of mass base, we discussed what kind of slogan we should raise. Throughout the two groups of Trotskyists there was only one comrade named Yin Kuan [尹宽], who must be in Mao's prison now if he is still alive, saying that we should raise the slogan "Welcome the Liberation Army." His argument was that we must go with the masses. The masses in fact were not so enthusiastic as to wish to welcome the Liberation Army, but they hated the Kuomintang government and its army. Peng determinedly opposed this slogan, but I can't remember now what his own slogan was. (Most probably he had none.) We too did not approve this slogan. Our reasoning was something like that: sure we should go with the masses and we should not raise slogans like "Fight against the Liberation Army," nor "Do not let the Liberation army come." But the most important thing, we thought, was for the masses to organize their own power, not depending upon the Liberation Army. We thought we should say to the masses that if they rely on liberation army, they would soon be disillusioned.

Biographical List:

The following list is based on the 'Select Biographical Reference List' of "Wang Fan-hsi: Chinese Revolutionary - Memoir 1919-1949" (translated by Gregor Benton, Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 261-278), the 'Select Biographical Reference List' of "An Oppositionist for Life: Memoirs of the Chinese Revolutionary Zheng Chaolin [Cheng Ch'ao-lin]" (edited and translated by Gregor Benton, Humanity Press International, New Jersey, 1997, pp. 275-288) and the biographical list of Cheng Ch'ao-lin's memoir in Japanese ("中国革命の初期 [Lively Crowd of the Early Chinese Communist Party]", vol. 2, Heibonsha, 2003).

Chang Jiu [陳九]

A Hong Kong worker. A member of the “Our Word” group.

Chao Chi [趙齊] (1902-)

Veteran Communist. Participated in the Northern Expedition as a political commissar. Became a Trotskyist in Moscow in 1928. Founded the “Struggle [鬥爭]” group together with Liu Yin [劉銀] in 1930, and a member of the provisional leadership after the arrest of Ch'en Tu-hsiu. Arrested by the CCP government in 1952, and released in 1979.

Ch'en Ch'i-ch'ang [陳其昌] (1905-42)

A Peking student leader, and joined the CCP in 1925. Turned to Trotskyism in 1929, and became a leader of the Chinese Trotskyist movement. Wrote a letter to Lu Hsün [盧訓] in 1936. Killed by the Japanese military police in 1942.

Ch'en I-mou [陳毅] (1907-32)

Joined the communist youth, and sent to the Soviet Union for studying. Participated in the pro-Trotsky demonstration at Moscow, and sent back to China.

One of the four Trotskyists who founded the “Our Word [我們的話]” group in 1928.

Ch'en Tu-hsiu [陳天華] (1879-1942)

Editor of “New Youth”, leader of the New Culture Movement, founder of the CCP and its General Secretary until 1927. Became Trotskyist in 1929.

Cheng Ch'ao-lin [程朝林] (1901-)

Writer and translator. Joined the CCP in Paris in 1922. Returned to China in 1924 to edit the party organ Hsiang-tao (向導 Guide Weekly). Became a Trotskyist in 1929. Founded the minority Internationalist Workers Party together with Wang Fan-hsi. Arrested by the Maoist secret police in 1952. Kept in prison without trial until 1979. See “An Oppositionist for Life: Memoirs of the Chinese Revolutionary Zhen Chaolin” (edited and translated by Gregor Benton, Humanity Press International, New Jersey, 1997).

Chiang Chen-tung [蔣陳東] (1906-1982)

A textile worker and veteran Communist. One of the leaders of the Shanghai insurrections of 1927. Became a Trotskyist in 1929. Arrested by the Maoist police in 1952, and released in 1979.

Chik Sing-wang [戚勝王]

The hero of the Marco Polo Bridge [盧溝橋] battle with the Japanese army in 1937.

Chou En-lai [周恩來] (1898-1976)

Joined the CCP in France in 1922. Most prominent organizer, negotiator and administrator of the CCP. A survivor of all the internal factional struggles. Premier of the People's Republic of China from 1949 until his death.

Chou Yang [周揚] (1908-1989)

Left-wing literary leader in Shanghai in the years 1933-6. Principal of the Art Academy in Yen-an [延安] during the War of Resistance. Vice-Minister of Culture after the victory of the CCP. Arrested in January 1967 as a 'capitalist roader'.

Frank Glass, alias Li Fu-jen [李富堅] (1901-1987)

South African nationality. A central-committee member of the US Trotskyist organization, Socialist Workers Party. Came to China as a US journalist, helped the Chinese Trotskyist movement, and a leader of the movement from 1934 to 1938.

Ho Chi-feng [何其丰] (1897-1980)

Rebelled against Chiang Kai-shek in 1948 while vice-commander of the Kuomintang's Third Pacification Area. After 1949 Ho became a vice-minister of irrigation and vice-minister of agriculture.

Li Chi [李季] (1894- ?)

Known as the first Marxist scholar in China. Author of "A Biography of Karl Marx". Became a Trotskyist in 1929. Given up the Trotskyist position and accepted Mao Tse-tung in 1950.

Liu Chia-liang [刘嘉亮] (? -1950)

A leader of the second-generation Chinese Trotskyists. Became a member of the provisional leadership in 1937. Participated in founding of the Revolutionary Communist Party together with Peng Shu-tse in 1948, and escaped to Hong Kong in the same year. Moved to Vietnam in 1950, arrested and died in a Vietnamese prison.

Liu Jen-ching [刘静生] (1899-)

A founding member of the CCP and General Secretary of the Socialist League of Youth. Joined the Left Opposition at Moscow in 1927, and visited Trotsky in Prinkipo, Turkey, in 1929. After returning to China he played a part in organizing the first groups of Chinese Trotskyists, and helped Harold Isaacs write his book, "The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution". Arrested in 1934, recanted in prison and worked for the Kuomintang, again recanted and accepted Mao Tse-tung in 1950.

Liu Yin [刘尹] (? -1934)

A leader of the Wuhan student movement during the 1925-7 revolution. Studied in Moscow. Founded the "Struggle [斗争]" group together with Chao Chi [赵基] in 1930, and active for a while in the Chinese Trotskyist movement, then became a publicist for the Kuomintang.

Lo Han [罗汉] (1898-1939)

Went to France, and participate in the Chinese student movement at Lyon and forced to return to China in 1921. Joined the CCP in 1922. Active in the Kuomintang army until 1926, and went to Moscow in the same year. Became a Trotskyist in 1928, and elected to the central committee at the unification conference of Trotskyist groups in 1931. Died in Chungking during a Japanese air-raid.

Lou Kuo-hua [罗国华] (1906-1995)

A Communist since 1925, and became a Trotskyist in 1928. Arrested by the Kuomintang in 1931, and released in 1934, when he joined the provisional leadership of the Chinese Trotskyist group. A member of the minority Internationalist Workers Party together with Cheng Ch'ao-lin and Wang Fan-hsi, and moved to Hong Kong in 1949. He had been the chief publisher of Trotskyist literature in mainland China and Hong Kong.

Lu Hsün [鲁迅] (1881-1936)

Modern China's best-known novelist, essayist, and critic, known as 'China's Gorky'. He supported the Chinese revolutionary movement. Original name Chou Shu-jen [周树人].

Ou Fang [欧方] (? - 1931)

Joined the CCP in 1925, and active as a member of the communist youth. Sent to Moscow for studying, participated in the pro-Trotsky demonstration at Moscow, and sent back to China. One of the four Trotskyists who founded the "Our Word [我们的话]" group in 1928. Active among Hong Kong ship-building workers together with Chen I-mou. Arrested by the Kuomintang in 1930 and died in prison.

Peng Shu-tse [彭書澤] (1896-1983)

Joined the CCP and was sent to Moscow in 1921. Returned to China in 1924, and a member of the Central Committee of the CCP after 1925. Chief editor of the Party organ during the 1925-7 revolution. Expelled together with Ch'en Tu-hsiu in November 1929 for supporting Trotskyism. Arrested in 1932, and after release in 1937 he continued his leadership activities. Represented the majority group of the Chinese Trotskyist movement, and founded the Revolutionary Communist Party in 1948. In the same year he moved to Hong Kong, and came to France via Vietnam. A member of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International at Paris in the early 1950s. Lived for several years in Los Angeles before his death.

Pu Teh-chih [普德志] (1905-1997)

Alias Hsi Liu [許立]. Ch'en Tu-hsiu's cousin. Joined the CCP in 1926, and became a Trotskyist in Moscow in 1928. Elected to the central committee at the 1931 unification conference of the Chinese Trotskyist groups. Arrested together with Ch'en Tu-hsiu in 1932, and released from prison in 1937. Arrested by the CCP in 1952, and released after his recantation.

Sung Che-yuan [宋哲元] (1885-1940)

Originally a high-ranking general under Feng Yu-hsiang [馮玉祥]. With Chiang Kai-shek's approval he became head of a pro-Japanese/buffer administration in north China in 1935. Commander of the 29th Army on the outbreak of the anti-Japanese war in 1937.

Sung Feng-ch'un [宋鳳春] (1907- ?)

Joined the CCP in 1925, and sent to Moscow for studying. Participated in the pro-Trotsky demonstration at Moscow, and sent back to China. One of the four Trotskyists who founded the "Our Word [我們的話]" group in 1928. Elected to the central committee at the 1931 unification conference of the Chinese Trotskyist groups. Arrested in 1931, and left the Trotskyist movement after his release in 1937.

Sun Yat-sen (Sun Wen) [孫中山 (文)] (1866-1925)

Represented the bourgeois national revolution of China. His nationalist political career started in 1894. The Republican Revolution of 1911 overthrew the Manchurian Qing dynasty: Sun became the provisional president of the Republic of China in 1912, but he quickly relinquished the position to Yuan Shi-kai [袁世凱] and the Republic degenerated soon, China entering the period of conflicting warloads. Founded the predecessor of the Kuomintang in 1915, and adopted the policy of Kuomintang-Communist collaboration in 1924.

Wang Ching-wei [汪精衛] (1883-1944)

Veteran member of the Kuomintang and at first leader of its Left Wing. He later compromised with Chiang Kai-shek and ended up a Japanese puppet.

Yin Kuan [殷關] (1897-1967)

Veteran Communist who joined the CCP in France together with Chou En-lai. Active in the Shandon [山東] Provincial Committee, the Anhui [安徽] Provincial Committee and the Kiangsu-Chekiang [江浙] Regional Committee of the CCP in 1925-7, and became a Trotskyist in 1929. Twice arrested by the Kuomintang. Joined the Revolutionary Communist Party founded by Peng Shu-tse [彭書澤] in 1948. Arrested by the Maoists in 1952, and released due to his disease in 1965.

Footnotes

[1] On the numerical size of those Chinese Trotskyists in Moscow, there are following descriptions in Wang Fan-hsi's "Chinese Revolutionary: Memoirs 1919-1949" (Gregor Benton/trans., Oxford University Press, 1980): "In the winter of 1928 the Opposition rapidly expanded its organization among the Chinese students in Moscow. We had comrades everywhere: in the Lenin Institute, in the various military academies, and in particular at the Sun Yat-sen University, where out of a total of four hundred students about one hundred and fifty were Trotskyists, either as members or as close sympathizers of the organization" (p. 86); "Our activities were of necessity confined to the Chinese student body, whose number had dropped by the summer of 1929 from almost a thousand to only four or five hundred. Of that number, nearly a third had already been won over to our side" (pp. 96-97); and "The Oppositionist organization among the Chinese Communists in Moscow had grown even bigger after my return to China. Since there had been over two hundred of us in 1929, we must eventually have come to account for at least half of the five hundred or more Chinese students there." (p. 127).

[2] According to Wang's memoir, "Disguised as oversea Chinese, we slipped back into Shanghai via Korea, then a Japanese colony. ... we ... boarded in a ship at Vladivostok." (Ibid., pp. 105-6). Vladivostok is the terminal city of the Trans-Siberian Railway, and Dairen is a port city on Liaodong Peninsula of the northeastern China, thus "Yuansang" and "Yenchong" must be Korean cities. "Yuansang" might be "Weonsan" (southeastern port city of the northern Korea), for "Weonsan" is pronounced as "Yuanshan" in Chinese, and "Yenchong" must be "Incheon" (northwestern port city of the southern Korea).

[3] In the Chinese revised and enlarged edition of the Wan Fan-hsi memoir, the CC list is identical to that of the Wan Fan-hsi interview, but a question mark (?) is added after "Chang Jiu" ("Chang Jiu", 1994, p. 190). Then, according to the English edition of the Wan Fan-hsi memoir (1980), "the following comrades were elected to the formal leadership body of the new unified organization: Ch'en Tu-hsiu, Lo Han, Sung Feng-ch'un, Ch'en I-mou, Chao Chi, and myself." (Ibid., p. 149) In this list, "Chang Jiu" is not present and "Chao Chi" is included. However, the Hong-Kong edition of the memoir was the latest revised one, and it was checked by Cheng Ch'ao-lin and the author himself.

[4] "Pok Silao" might be the Cantonese pronunciation of "Pu Teh", and the latter was an alias of "Pu Teh-chih". This person was arrested together with Cheng Ch'ao-lin, Wang Fan-shi and others in 1931, according to Wang Fan-hsi's memoir (Ibid., p. 157).

[5] This "open letter" was not written by Lu Hsün himself, who was severely ill at the time. It was drafted and published by Feng Hsüeh-feng, who was a poet and critic, a close friend of the former, and also a middleman as a CCP member between Lu Hsün and the Communist Party in those days. See Yuzo Nagahori "Lu Hsün and Trotsky" (ibid., pp. 212-230, 454-6).

[6] The year might be "1937".